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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

SS - 50

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FARMS GETTING LARGER AND FEWER

Preliminary totals from 1945 census show some 5,860,000 farms in the country or 600,000 less than in 1920, despite a 186 million acre increase in farm land. Total acreage in farms about 1.1 billion acres. The average farm is now 20 acres larger than 5 years ago and 50 acres larger than 25 years ago. In Midwest where extremes are less numerous, average farm has enlarged by about 30 acres in 25 years. Over half of all farm land in the country is now in farms of over 300 acres (in 1920 it was only a third). Farms over 1,000 acres now account for 40 percent of the farm land (nearly 460 million acres), compared with less than 25 percent 25 years ago. Rapid increase in size of farms largely due to mechanization and other technological advances.

SOME SPECULATION IN LAND?

In last three years land sales have exceeded 1919, the peak year in other war period. Average values advanced more in recent war period than during other war and are now only about 11 percent below the 1920 inflationary peak. Of the roughly 50 percent of transfers financed on mortgage, downpayments averaged two-fifths of purchase price during last three years as compared with about one-third in 1941 and 1942. But many land buyers are beginning to go heavily in debt. Mortgages in recent years have amounted to 75 percent or more of sales price in one-third of such sales and 50 percent or more in three-fourths of sales. Total farm mortgage debt, which had been declining for over twenty years, has reversed itself and increased during past year. Total farm mortgage debt on July 1, 1946 (\$5,160,000,000) was about \$80 million higher than 6 months before.

WHEAT STOCKS SMALL - FEED GRAINS AMPLE

Stocks of wheat on farms January 1 second smallest since 1941, estimated 366 million bushels compared with 361 million year ago and 292 million the January 1 average for 1936-45. Movement of wheat away from farms October 1 to January 1 was largest on record (186 million bushels compared with 157 million year earlier).

Stocks of corn, for grain, on farms, 2,166 million bushels compared with 1,859 million year ago and 1,730 million average. Corn stocks on hand this winter 17 percent more than year ago. Most corn is of high quality.

Stocks of oats on farms 899 million bushels compared with 977 million bushels year ago and 716 million average.

Soybean stocks 36.5 million bushels compared with 43.3 million bushels year ago.

Stocks of hay on farms second largest in 10 years, 70 million tons compared with 74 million tons year ago and 66 million tons average.

Total feed grain supplies this winter, exceeded only once (1943) and in relation to livestock to be fed, are largest of record.

6 PERCENT MORE SOWS TO FARROW THIS SPRING

Number pigs saved from 1946 fall crop, 30.6 million, about 11 percent under 1945 fall crop, 5 percent below 1935-44 average and smallest fall crop since 1940. Number sows farrowed last fall 13 percent under 1945 for U. S. and down 16 percent for cornbelt. Combined spring and fall pig crop of 1946 was 83.2 million head, about 4 percent under 1945, smallest crop since 1940, but about 1 percent above ten-year average.

Reports on breeding intentions for 1947 spring crop indicate about 8.6 million sows to farrow. This would be about 6 percent above last spring and average. Indicated increase considerably less than has occurred in other years when prices, feed supplies and other conditions were as favorable as this season. If number of pigs saved per litter is about average the 1947 spring crop will be only about 1 percent larger than last spring.

December survey showed about 4 percent fewer hogs over 6 months old (including brood sows) on farms December 1 than year earlier--indications being that 1946 spring pigs have moved to market somewhat faster than did 1945 spring crop.

MORE CATTLE ON FEED IN CORN BELT

Number cattle on feed for market, as of January 1, about 2 percent larger than year ago, 4,307,000 head compared with 4,211,000 year previous, 4,411,000 two years previous, record high of 4,445,000 at beginning of 1943, and 4,224,000 the 1941-45 average. Number in 12 North Central States (includes corn belt) about 4 percent more than year ago. Near record number in Iowa and Illinois. Number cattle on feed outside corn belt about 3 percent under year ago.

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Nov. 15 1946	Dec. 15 1946	Dec. 15 1946
Wheat, bu.	dol. 1.89	1.92	1.88
Corn, bu.	dol. 1.27	1.22	1.37
Peanuts, lb.	ct. 9.53	8.89	10.20
Cotton, lb.	ct. 29.23	29.98	26.41
Potatoes, bu.	dol. 1.23	1.26	1.58
Hogs, 100 lb.	dol. 22.80	22.70	15.50
Beef cattle, 100 lb. . .	dol. 17.60	17.40	11.50
Veal calves, 100 lb. . .	dol. 17.30	17.40	14.40
Lambs, 100 lb.	dol. 18.40	18.60	12.50
Butterfat, lb.	ct. 84.4	87.0	161.3
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. .	dol. 5.13	5.15	13.73
Chickens, live, lb. . . .	ct. 27.5	27.4	24.3
Eggs, doz.	ct. 47.8	47.	155.4

¹Adjusted for seasonal variation.

MILK PRODUCTION

Milk production in December estimated 8.4 billion pounds, slightly above year ago, high output per cow offsetting smaller number cows. (In preceding months of 1946, milk production ran 1 to 3 percent below 1945.) Total milk production for 1946 now estimated slightly under 120 billion pounds, about 2 percent below 1945 record, but above any other year. Production of milk per capita of total population, in 1946, was lowest since 1940 but about 2 percent above 1935-44 average. Wisconsin, leading dairy State, produced 996 million pounds of milk in December, equalling its record year previous; Iowa produced 445 million pounds; Michigan 395 million pounds, new record; Illinois 395 million pounds.

HEAVY EGG PRODUCTION - FEWER PULLETS

Egg production in December estimated 3.7 billion eggs, an all time record for the month, 9 percent over previous December and over 1½ times the 1935-44 average. Eggs laid per hen 14 percent above previous December record in 1945, more than offset 5 percent decrease in number hens. Total egg output for 1946 estimated 54.9 billion eggs, about 1 percent under 1945, result of 3 percent fewer hens, although latter was partly offset by 2 percent increase in eggs per hen. Average number of eggs laid per hen last year, 154 compared with 151 in 1945, and average of 136 eggs. This trend has been upward in the past few years, a result of better chicks, feed and management. Earlier hatching and artificial lights bringing larger percentage of eggs now in fall and winter than was true 5 years ago. Number layers in December averaged 389 million, 5 percent fewer than year previous but 9 percent above average. Potential layers January 1 (including young pullets) 433 million, 8 percent under year ago but 4 percent above 1936-45 average. Number pullets not of laying age January 1 estimated 37.7 million, smallest number in 17 years of record, 30 percent under year ago and 25 percent under average.

SLIGHTLY FEWER WINTER VEGETABLES

Supply of commercial winter vegetables now estimated 1,404,800 tons compared with 1,446,900 tons year ago and 1936-45 average of 1,092,500 tons. Materially less beets and lima beans, somewhat less cabbage, celery, lettuce and tomatoes. Beets 10 percent below average. Acreage of winter season vegetables estimated 301,540 acres, 1 percent below last year but 16 percent above average.

FATS AND OILS

Production of fats and oils from domestic materials this season may be about like last season, 8.9 billion pounds. This is slightly under 1937-41 average and considerably below peak year 1933-44 when output was 11.2 billion pounds. 1946-47 cottonseed oil output will be smallest in 25 years, around 8 to 10 percent less than the 1,017 million pounds in 1945-46. Soy bean oil slightly above last season's output of 1,409 million pounds. Total 1946 exports fats and oils from world surplus areas to North America and Europe about 4.9 billion pounds or about 1.1 billion more than in 1945, but less than half of prewar. Chief gains in 1946 were Philippine Copra and Antarctic Whale Oil.

AMPLE CITRUS FRUIT

Total 1946 crop of oranges and tangerines indicate 124 million boxes, compared with 105 million in 1945 and 81 million the 1935-44 average. Grapefruit 66.7 mil-

lion boxes, compared with 63.6 million in 1945 and 40 million average. Lemons 13.9 million boxes compared with 14.5 million in 1945 and 11.5 million boxes average.

MORE FARM WORKERS

Number of workers on farms January 1, 8,272,000 an increase of 7 percent over the number a year ago (7,732,000). Number of family workers, 6,747,000 compared with 6,412,000 year ago, 7,159,000 January prewar average 1935-39, and 9,160,000 average 1910-14. Number hired workers 1,525,000 compared with 1,320,000 year ago, 1,675,000 prewar and 2,892,000 in 1910-14. Farm wages this January averaged 10 percent higher than year ago and more than three times January average 1935-39.

FARM RECEIPTS

Total cash receipts from products sold during November \$3,089,000,000 compared with \$2,317,000,000 in November 1945. These figures include \$13,000,000 Government payments this November and \$40,000,000 Government payments year ago. Total receipts for 11 months January-November \$22,405,000,000 compared with \$19,643,000,000, for the like period 1945. Latter figures include Government payments \$793,000,000 in 1946 and \$755,000,000 in 1945.

MARKETING MARGINS

Consumers' retail cost of "market basket" of farm food products jumped from \$539 in September to \$600 in October, reaching a retail level only slightly below the record of \$615 in June 1920. Cash receipts by farmers for equivalent produce going into the "Market Basket" amounted to \$335 in October, 16 percent above September and 28 percent above January 1920, which was the peak after World War I. Charges for marketing this quantity of products were \$266 in October about 2 percent above September.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE		
INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	Dec. 1946
Prices received by farmers . .	1910-14 = 100	264
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes	1910-14 = 100	213
Parity ratio	1910-14 = 100	124
Wholesale prices of food . .	1910-14 = 100	250
Retail prices of food . . .	1910-14 = 100	1242
Farm wage rates	1910-14 = 100	378
Weekly factory earnings . .	1910-14 = 100	2406
RATIOS	LONG-TIME Dec. - AVERAGE	Dec. 1946
Hog-corn ratio, U. S. . . .	12.2	12.5
Butterfat-feed ratio, U. S. .	24.2	26.8
Milk-feed ratio, U. S. . . .	1.26	1.35
Egg-feed ratio, U. S. . . .	12.7	11.3
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Nov. 1945	Jan.-Nov. 1946
Milk, (Bil. lb.)	113.8	111.5
Eggs, (Bil.)	52	51
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . .	6,704	5,026
Lamb Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)	833	792
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.) . . .	7,130	7,531
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)	15,425	13,924
¹ Nov. figure.		
² Factory pay roll per employed worker. Nov. figure.		
³ Sept. figure.		